

Church Association of the Diocese of Toronto.

OCCASIONAL PAPER No. X.

A COADJUTOR BISHOP.

The Church in this Diocese has just passed through a crisis of no ordinary magnitude; and it is important that its members should realise the grave significance of the question involved. In accordance, as is believed, with the primitive usage of the Church, full Synodical powers have been revived; and the clergy and the representative lay delegates in Annual Synod, with the Bishop as presiding officer, deliberate on the best interests of the Church, restrained only by the laws and canons enacted for regulating Synodical action.

Among all the powers and duties entrusted to the Synod, none is more important than that of the election of a Bishop. It is provided that on a vacancy occurring in the See, all requisite steps shall be taken for summoning the Synod to make free choice of a successor. Provision is also made for the election, under certain rare and wholly exceptional circumstances, of a Coadjutor Bishop, who by the Canon succeeds to the see on a vacancy occurring. But the whole history of the Church proves that this was regarded as a course to be resorted to only under extreme necessity; while the influence which it inevitably confers on the Bishop in the selection of one who is to act for, and with him, in the exercise of his Episcopal functions, was felt to be so great, that by the Canons of the early Church no Suffragan or Coadjutor Bishop could succeed to the See.

The election of the present Bishop, as Coadjutor and successor to Bishop Strachan, took place under very unusual circumstances. The venerable Bishop was then in his ninetieth year; and, as he himself said, "The weight of years, and the infirmities they bring," moved him to ask for a Coadjutor; for, said he, "although equal to some duties, there are others of paramount importance, which I am warned not again to attempt." The income of the late Bishop, moreover, was de-

rived from sources which, to a large extent, terminated with his life; and efficient steps had accordingly been taken towards providing the requisite income for the future occupant of the See. Hence, no difficulty in relation to income narrowed the choice of the Synod in their selection.

The contrast is, in all respects, striking, on comparing the former circumstances with those under which the Synod recently met. In 1866 the first Pan-Anglican Synod was about to assemble at Lambeth; and the presence of the late revered Bishop would have been very welcome, had that been possible. But in lieu of that, one of the first duties undertaken by his Coadjutor, was to supply his place there; and brief though his absence was, he only returned in time to be present at the Bishop's funeral. How different is it now:—

1st. The Lord Bishop informed the Synod, in his opening address, that he had felt it his duty to accept the invitation to the Conference of Bishops, at Lambeth Palace, in July next, "because no one blessed with the needful health and strength should decline such a duty." He further mentioned his "desire of spending a few months in the old world," and then added: "At the advanced age which, by God's good Providence, I have been permitted to reach, I cannot restrain the feeling that *my time for active and efficient work in God's Church cannot be long.*" Here, therefore, it is manifest that the time had not yet come when anything more was needed than the temporary services of a Commissary for a period which was to be extended for the very purpose of health and relaxation.

2d. It is also to be borne in remembrance that the Diocese over which his Lordship was appointed as assistant and successor to the late Bishop, has been twice divided since then. Bishop Fuller now relieves him of the western part; Bishop Fauquier has entire charge of the north, including the whole outlying and remote parishes and districts of Muskoka and Algoma. The services of both Bishops are available, and it cannot be doubted would be freely rendered, in any emergency.

3d. The total absence of any provision for the income of the proposed Coadjutor was felt so strongly on all sides that, after the discussion had proceeded for some time, the Lord Bishop interposed, and intimated his purpose, at some future date, subsequent to his return from Europe, to resign part of his own limited income to his Coadjutor. But had the Synod seen fit to make choice of some clergyman, rich in all the gifts and graces most needful for the high office, but poor in

this world's goods, what was to become of him in the interval? The Canon is explicit in forbidding his consecration as Bishop until he has resigned whatever benefice he may hold. Thus—in marked contrast to all the circumstances under which a previous Coadjutor had been elected,—the Synod was practically narrowed down to the choice of Archdeacon Whitaker, who, as Provost of Trinity College, enjoys emoluments over which the Synod has no control, and which are consequently beyond reach of the restrictions of the Canon, notwithstanding the fact that they are mainly derived from the Clergy Commutation Fund. The bearing of the above facts in limiting the choice of the Synod was so manifest, that in nominating a clergyman from another Canadian Diocese, notorious for his ritualistic proclivities, his wealth was the argument urged in his favour.

Earnest prayer was invited, and was offered to the Great Head of the Church, to guide the Synod in its action; nor can we doubt that under the overruling Providence of God, the Church has been preserved from what practically involved the depriving the Synod of the elective franchise, and forcing upon the Diocese, as its future Bishop, a clergyman, who, whatever be his claims for learning and piety, is one whose selection would have been hailed as a triumph by all who specially favour sacerdotal teaching, and the ritualistic excesses which are its inevitable results. Nor is it concealed even by many of the adherents of the proposed Coadjutor, that, however estimable he may be personally, he lacks important qualifications to be looked for in the future Bishop of this Diocese, if he is to be successful in healing divisions, and conciliating all who, however opposed on some points, are honestly desirous of promoting the highest interests of the Church.

Persistent attempts have been made to convey the impression that the Church Association—for some inconceivable reason—pledged itself to the election of the Provost. So far was this from being the case that the summons of an extraordinary meeting of Synod for the appointment of a Coadjutor took the Executive Committee of the Association by surprise; and the prompt protest in the *Evangelical Churchman* left no room for doubt as to the views entertained on the subject. It is now manifest that a great danger has been averted; and if the influence of the Church Association has contributed to this important result, let us thank God and take courage. But recognising the importance of the recent crisis, it has seemed to

the Executive Committee desirable to place before its members, and the church at large, a brief statement of facts.

Before the meeting of the Synod in 1877, it was widely rumored that an election of a Coadjutor Bishop was contemplated; nor was the favoured individual unnamed. But the proposal was abandoned, owing, as was currently stated, to the absence of all provision for the maintenance of the Coadjutor. It is to be feared that this led the Evangelical portion of our church to be less careful than it ought to have been, in seeing to the selection of delegates prepared to take a clear and decided course in any emergency.

When the Synod met in June last, the first step was to oust from the office of lay secretary, one who, for several years, had filled it with credit to himself, and much advantage to the Synod. Having thus tested their strength, the dominant party proceeded, as in former years, to so constitute Standing Committees as to exclude almost every member of the Church Association. The few who were retained,—while their names might serve to blind their friends throughout the Diocese to the partial constitution of the committees,—were so manifestly liable to responsibility for what they could neither approve of nor prevent, that they felt it their duty to decline to act.

The regular session of the Synod transpired without any intimation by the Bishop of a desire for the appointment of a Coadjutor; and it was not until the last day allowed by law for calling a meeting for such a purpose, that publicity was given to the proposal. So far from the leading members of the Evangelical party having been consulted, the formal notice summoning the Synod to meet, within three weeks, for the election of a Coadjutor Bishop, was the first intimation which the great majority of the lay delegates received that such a step had been in deliberation. There is, in truth, no reason for doubting that the whole scheme was matured in private by a few who profess to guide the Synod, with the determinate purpose of effecting the appointment of Provost Whitaker. They alone had timely notice of the Bishop's consent to submit the question to the Synod; and their nominee was selected under circumstances of so exceptional a character that, it was useless to look out for other candidates. It was indeed easy to name men more desirable, and far more capable of filling the office of Bishop with benefit to the church; but it was vain to elect them when not the slightest provision had been made for their support.

This question of maintenance, it is manifest, is one of the gravest importance in its bearing on the whole question of the election of a Coadjutor Bishop; and it may prove of no slight significance in the true interests of the church, that it has thus been forced with such prominence on the attention of all. Without some adequate provision, it has been made abundantly obvious that the Synod has no free voice in the election of their future Bishop; and the system, if once established, would practically resolve itself into every Bishop appointing his successor. There is a manifest danger of the possessor of private wealth, or the holder of an office securing emoluments beyond control of the Synod, coming to be recognised as possessing more important evidences of fitness for the office of Bishop than if he had all the gifts and graces enumerated by St. Paul. When the necessity for the appointment of a Coadjutor is urgent, the means for his maintenance may be asked with confidence from the laity, if they would not have the office of Bishop put up, as it were, to the highest bidder.

Attempts have been made to censure certain of the clergy, who, as they could not conscientiously vote for the Provost, and saw plainly that no other choice was open to them, silently withdrew. The Canon specially provides that, unless there are two-thirds both of Clergy and of Parishes, as represented by their Lay Delegates, *present and voting*, a two-thirds vote of both orders shall be necessary for election. Provision was thus designedly made for the case which has now occurred of those who, though present, could not conscientiously vote. As by their action, an effectual impediment was placed in the way of a choice which they believed was calculated to be injurious to the Church, the course pursued by them was not only their right, but their manifest duty.

Had those by whom the Provost of Trinity College was openly announced as the destined Coadjutor; who strove in the Synod to stifle discussion, and to brand all opposition as discourtesy, if not disloyalty to their Bishop, succeeded in their purpose: the future Bishop would have been one appointed by a process which deprived the Synod of its legitimate rights in the free choice to so important an office; and the result must have removed all hope of conciliating the divided interests which impede the Church's progress. That this attempt to coerce the Synod into the formal confirmation of the nominee of a party, was unworthy of those who instigated and supported it, must now be apparent even to themselves, if they have given

a calm consideration to the closing words of the Lord Bishop, before adjourning the Synod. In these it is placed beyond doubt that unless the Provost could be elected there was to be no Coadjutor ; and consequently, that the resolution moved by the Chancellor of the diocese, and so largely supported by the clergy, affirming that it was not only desirable, but necessary to appoint a Coadjutor, should have read that it was desirable and expedient to have Provost Whitaker as Coadjutor.

The Synod of Feb. 1878 will not have been fruitless, if it impresses upon the Church throughout the whole Dominion the lessons involved in this unsuccessful attempt to render nugatory the laws which the Synod had enacted, with great care and deliberation, for the very purpose of securing perfect freedom of election. Let it be kept constantly in remembrance, as a guide to the action of all who love their Church, in carefully looking to the choice of Delegates to represent the various congregations at the Synod. The great body of the laity are sound in their attachment to the principles of the Protestant Church of England ; but they are not always careful to see that those who are entrusted with the duty of maintaining their views and interests at the Synod do actually and truly represent them. If they have not men in their own parish or congregation, able and willing to do so, they cannot be too careful in ascertaining the views of those to whom they entrust their rights. The choice of the Lay Delegates to the Synod is one in which the clergyman not only is not permitted to nominate, but in which he has no right to interfere.

The privileges of the laity in the Synodical action of the Church have proved in the case of the Church of Ireland, in recent years, the grand safeguard of sound Protestantism ; and the peace and prosperity of our branch of the Church in Canada largely depends on its members choosing as the Delegates who are to represent them in the Synod, men of proved integrity, and of unflinching fidelity to the principles established by the fathers of our Church at the Reformation.

Those desirous of joining the Association will please send their names, addresses and subscriptions to B. Homer Dixon, or John Gillespie, Honorary Secretaries, Toronto, to whom all communications are to be addressed.

Members and Corresponding Members :—Yearly subscriptions, One Dollar ; Life Members, Donation Twenty-five Dollars.

The papers of the C. A. may be obtained by Members, for distribution, free, on application to either of the above named Honorary Secretaries ; by others, at \$1.00 per fifty, 30 cents per dozen, or five cents each, on application to Hart & Rawlinson, Booksellers, 5 King Street West, Toronto.